

The Tyrant Queen
By William F. Nolan

SETTING

The Kingdom of Atlantis

Located on the Aegean Sea two hundred miles southwest of Greece, a land mass larger than Asia Minor and Lybya combined, there is a glittering kingdom of gold-encrusted streets, great crystal palaces and with a vast harbor crowded with tall ships designed to cross trade routes around the globe. Ruled by King Alonar, a weak monarch totally dominated by his queen, Evilla.

HISTORY

Much of our action takes place in the central city of Sha-Mar, named after the god of the sun. The citizens revere Sha-Mar and have built a gigantic crystal temple in the god's honor (second in size only to the Queen's temple in the heart of the city.) Solar energy provides the power source for all of Atlantis, and the sun is worshipped as the source of Eternal Light.

LOCALES

Royal Gardens
Temple of Sacrifice
Hut of the Witch
Mountain volcano
Under city catacombs
The Great hall of the Palace
Drawbridge spanning River Ishta
Palace courtyard
Tower room
Slave quarters
Undersea area
Tombs
King's bedroom
Queen's chamber

CHARACTERS

Semicus (our hero, an ex-slave)
Marsilla (our heroine, the Queen's daughter)
King Alonar (a weak ruler)
Evilla (Queen of Atlantis)
Elnar (exiled priest)
The Giant squid (who rules the sea)
The Witch of Eldstich (with magic powers)
Zoltar (the apple loving dragon)
The Beast Creatures (half human, half animal)
(plus assorted zombies, virgins, hellhounds, palace guards, etc.)

PROLOGUE

Night in the slave quarters. Semicus could not sleep. He lay on his back, staring at the jeweled ceiling. Atlantis was indeed a kingdom of jewels. Rubies, emeralds, pearls, diamonds, embedded in the walls and ceilings, doors and windows. A layer of gold coated the streets.

Yet all this wealth means nothing to Semicus. His freedom was all that mattered, and it was cruelly denied him. He was forced to serve the Queen as a body slave, and was constantly on call for his services. Only now, late at night here in the slave quarters, was he allowed the solitude of sleep.

On this night, however, Semicus was unable to sleep. His tortured mind told him that this restrictive life could not continue. He must seek personal freedom, at whatever cost. When the time was right. Soon... very soon...

Queen Evilla was in a stressful mood. This was the day she intended to eliminate her husband, King Alonar. The assassination must proceed without a flaw. Once the King was dead she would hold total power. Nothing must go wrong. Alonar must die!

For now, she needed to relax. A mild massage would calm her, a soothing, full body rub would ease her tension. She summoned one of her personal guards. "Bring Semicus to my chamber," she ordered.

"Yes, your majesty."

As Semicus worked his fingers into the muscles along the Queen's back, he thought about his early youth. Of his mother, bowed and old before her years of labor in the fields, whose heart had finally failed. Of his stalwart father, who was cut down trying to prevent his young son's capture. And he thought, bitterly, of his five years of slavery. *It must end.*

King Alonar paced his ornate bedchamber. He had experienced a troubling nightmare in which he had died at the hands of the palace guard. The dream disturbed him – as it suddenly became reality. His bedroom door crashed open and two burly palace guards, shouting "Traitor," hustled him from the chamber, down the hall to the outer courtyard.

"You can't do this to me," he shouted. "I am your King."

"Queen's orders," rasped a guard.

The king's head was placed upon a block and a single ax blow separated it from his body.

From a window in the Queen's chamber, Semicus witnessed the beheading. Too much! The King had been kind to him, favoring him among the other slaves, and this cold blooded act of murder could not be tolerated. The time had come for action.

Semicus leapt from the window, attacking the two palace guards. As other guards rushed into the courtyard, he grabbed a sword and fought his way out of the castle.

Semicus had achieved his goal.

He was free!

STORY TITLE: The Tyrant Queen

STORY GOAL: to defeat the evil Queen and rescue the Princess, the palace slaves and some virgins.

MAIN VILLAIN: Queen Evilla

VILLAIN'S ALLIES: Palace guards, zombies, beast creatures, and her three "hounds of Hell."

GENRE: Action thriller

TIME PERIOD: 10,000 B.C.

SETTING: various sites in the kingdom.

MOOD: heroic

BACKSTORY

The Kingdom of Atlantis is headed by King Alonar and Queen Evilla. The King is weak and indecisive, easily controlled by his ruthless wife. It is she who has forced the citizens of Atlantis to turn over half of their income each year to the palace. As a result, Evilla has amassed a fortune.

She also sends her palace soldiers into various sections of the kingdom to capture able-bodied young men who must henceforth serve as slaves. One of these is Semicus, 28, whose father dies in a futile effort to save his son from slavery. (The mother has expired from a fatal heart attack).

Serving the Queen is a hated job to Semicus, and he vows to seek his freedom. Having achieved this (acting upon the death of the King) he falls ill due to an arrow wound suffered during his escape and is nursed back to health by a legless old man, Elnar, who lives in the catacombs beneath the city. Elnar is an exiled priest who was banished from the castle when he refused to perform a blood sacrifice (involving the death of a young virgin) in the Temple of Sacrifice. As punishment, before his exile, Evilla had both of his legs amputated. He managed to survive, and now lives underground with his pet dragon, Zoltar, who brings him food and supplies.

At first, encountering the scaly creature, Semicus draws his sword to engage the dragon in battle, but Elnar intervenes, telling the youth that Zoltar is a loyal companion. Indeed, Zoltar becomes a close ally and friend to Semicus, who feeds him apples, and (at the story's climax) flies him and his beloved to safety.

Fully recovered, Semicus learns that the Queens' daughter, Princess Marsilla, has been imprisoned in the tower for refusing the hand of Duke Orkin, a gross and loutish man three times her age.

The rest of our story revolves around the efforts of Semicus to rescue Marsilla, and to free the palace slaves and doomed virgins, and end the corrupt rule of Queen Evilla. During the course of his many adventures, the heroic ex-slave must battle palace soldiers, a horde of zombies conjured from their tombs by Evilla, a giant sea squid, her hellhounds, and a deadly group of Beast Creatures, bred by the Queen.

Along the way, Semicus is helped by the Witch of Eldstich, who is in command of many magic powers. She gifts him with a magic ring that wards off spears and arrow, and a magic ax that cleaves through the thickest armour. She also turns him into a mouse so tha the can slip beneath the door to the tower room. Once there, he resumes human form to rescue Marsilla. Together, they are able to free the palace slaves.

But nothing daunts Evilla. She seems triumphant, surviving combat with the Witch of Eldstich, who expires in the fierce power-to-power battle with the ruthless Queen.

Semicus must now overcome a giant squid (by slicing through thick tentacles with his magic ax) in order to retrieve a golden chalice from the bottom of the sea. This object predicts the future and was thrown into the sea by Evilla who does not want anyone to know that she intends to destroy Atantis and escape with her treasure.

Locales for all this action include the Royal gardens and the Temple of Sacrifice, in which young virgins ar freed by Semicus.

At the climax, Evilla sets off a great volcanic quake that causes the sea to rise and engulf the Kingdom. At the harbor, where her treasure boat awits her, she destroys all the other boats, cutting off escape for her people. But one boat has been overlooked by her (taken inland earlier by Semicus to provide escape for Marsilla, his friends, and himself).

As Atlantis sinks into the sea, Elnar, along with the freed slaves and assorted virgins, are put aboard the final boat by Semicus. But there is no more room in the craft for Semicus and Marsilla (who elects to stay behind with her beloved when one of the slaves offers her his place in the overloaded boat).

The heroic pair seem destined to die when they are swept up by Zoltar, who flies them to safet on his back.

As his rewawrd, the dragon gets an apple. (Evilla does not escape; Semicus destroys her treasure boat by a beam from his magic ring and the evil ruler dies with her Kingdom.)

SCENES

1. The Assassination

Goal: Freedom for Semicus

Opposition: Palace guards

Location: slave quarters, castle chamber, King's bedroom, courtyard.

Tie-in:

Notes: The slave, Semicus, dreams of freedom. While serving the ruthless Queen Evilla, he witnesses the beheading of good King Alonar. Roused to action, he fights his way out of the castle, but is seriously wounded.

2. The Recovery

Goal: to regain his strength

Opposition: Zoltar the dragon – who proves to be an ally

Setting: the catacombs

Tie-in:

Notes: Semicus has his wound tended by Elnar, an exiled, legless priest who lives beneath the city. Semicus faces a fierce-looking dragon, and prepares to kill him, only to discover that this scaly beast is a pet. Hero and dragon form a lasting bond which includes Semicus feeding the dragon apples, the creature's favorite food.

3. The Rescue

Goal: to free Marsilla and the palace slaves

Opposition: castle guards, zombies, and hellhounds

Setting: castle sties, the tower room, slave quarters

Tie-in:

Notes: Semicus learns that Princess Marsilla is being held captive in the tower. He meets the Witch of Eldstich, who turns him into a mouse so that he can enter the castle and penetrate the tower room. After defeating the guards, he frees Marsilla, but has to battle the dark magic of Evilla who conjures up tomb zombies to kill him. However, using the magic ring given to him by the Witch, he wipes out the zombies and, with Marsilla, he frees the slaves.

4. The Sea Quest

Goal: to recover the golden chalice

Opposition: the giant squid

Setting: an undersea area of Atlantis

Tie-in:

Notes: The chalice is inscribed with a prediction of the future (revealing the Queen's plan of destruction). Marsilla sends Semicus into the sea to recover the chalice, but he almost dies fighting a giant squid. His magic allows him to prevail, and he recovers the golden cup.

5. The Power of the Queen

Goal: to stop Evilla before she can destroy Atlantis, and to rescue the virgins

Opposition: the Beast Creatures, hellhounds, etc.

Setting: Drawbride, Great Hall, Temple of Sacrifice.

Tie-in:

Notes: time is running out for Semicus. He must defeat the Queen before she destroys the Kingdom. While saving the young virgins in the Temple, Semicus is attacked by the Queen's hellhounds. He loses his ax, and fights them with his sword. Evilla eludes him.

6. The Sinking of Atlantis

Goal: to prevent the sinkin, and (whne this happens) to find a way to safety.

Opposition: Evilla, guards, mountain lava

Setting: palace gardens, mountain volcano.

Tie-in:

Notes: The Witch of Eldstich battles Evilla in the palace gardens, but is killed by the Queen. Evilla escapes to her witing treasure ship, and sets off the volcano which sinks Atlantis. (Semicus rescues marsilla from the molten lava.) He loads his friends ionto the final boat, but there is no room for him and Marsilla. She insists on staying with him – as he destroys Evilla by sinking her boat with his magi ring. Hero and heroine are save by the dragon who flies them to safety.